

What Are Staffed Family Child Care Networks?



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Quality Assurance



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Staffed family child care (FCC) networks are community-based programs with paid staff. These programs offer a menu of ongoing services and resources to affiliated FCC educators. They offer educators opportunities to develop a long-term professional relationship with FCC network specialists. They are also a place to connect with and learn from other educators.

What Do Staffed FCC Networks Do?

High-quality staffed FCC networks offer services to support home-based child care educators. Research suggests that staffed FCC network program components improve the quality of the family child care settings (Bromer, van Haitsma, Daley, & Modigliani, 2009). Staffed family networks:

- Rely on a theory of change model includes a clear and realistic vision of how network services impact educator, child, family, and community outcomes.
- Use service delivery strategies that include individual supports (visits to child care homes, coaching, consultation, warmlines) and group supports (training workshops, facilitated peer support groups) that are customized for the FCC educators.
- Establish relationships which are collaborative and foster mutual problem-solving; staff communicate openly and recognize and respect educators' cultures, values, and home environment and focus on enhancing educator-child and educator-family relationships.
- Employ network staff who receive specialized training in working with FCC educators and in child development across the age range; they have opportunities to engage in reflective supervision with supervisors and peer support with other network staff.

Staffed Family Child Care Network Services

- Visits to educators' homes to offer technical assistance or coaching
- Training workshops
- Peer networking
- Business support
- Provider warmline
- Materials and equipment

(Bromer, van Haitsma, Daley, & Modigliani, 2009)

Why Are Staffed FCC Networks Important?

FCC—which is non-parental child care provided within a caregiver’s home—is a critical component of the national child care system. Nationally, about one in five children (20 percent) receiving child care funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program were cared for in FCC settings in 2019 (Office of Child Care, 2021). Families choose FCC for the flexible hours, convenient neighborhood location, mixed-age groups, ability for siblings to be cared for together, cost, and the home-like setting that is often compatible with the cultural and linguistic preferences of children and families (Porter et al., 2010).

More than
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In 2019, prior to the coronavirus pandemic, in 35 states, 3,461,600 children below the age of six with all available parents in the workforce did not have access to formal child care (Smith et al., 2020). Contributing to this gap in access to formal child care is the overall decline in the number of family child care homes. More than **90,000 licensed family child care homes closed** in the United States between 2011 and 2017 (NCECQA, 2020). Fewer

FCC homes means fewer options for families. In communities without enough child care options, business and economic growth can suffer. **Staffed FCC networks are a proven strategy to recruit, support, and retain FCC educators in the field.**

Where Can I Learn More about Staffed FCC Networks?

The National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance delivers expert technical assistance in the areas of child care licensing, quality initiatives—including workforce strategies and professional development—financing, family child care, and supply building. To request technical assistance, contact your State Systems Specialist or email QualityAssuranceCenter@ecetta.info. To learn more, visit [National Resources about Family Child Care](#) for resources and tools.

References

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